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4th Annual Placemaking Residency Moves Twin Cities to Better Health

Weeklong series produced by Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation will explore the connection between urban design and population health

March 31, 2015 – St. Paul, MN – Population health is one of the most profound issues facing American society today. There is growing evidence that well designed cities can contribute to a reduction in obesity, heart and lung disease, diabetes, social isolation, and other issues that compromise our communities.

During the week of May 11-15, individuals, organizations, and institutions throughout the Greater Minneapolis Saint Paul region will explore the intersection between urban design and population health with the aid of internationally renowned experts, Dr. Richard Jackson, Dr. Anthony Iton, and Gehl Studio as part of the 4th Annual Placemaking Residency.

Produced by Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation and with lead support from HealthEast, the 4th Annual Placemaking Residency engages communities in presentations, workshops, walking and biking tours, and hands-on activities applying the newest thinking in city design.

“Last year, the Placemaking Residency introduced thousands in our region to Gil Penalosa and the 8-80 Cities concept. This led to tangible change, including Saint Paul’s 8-80 Vitality Fund designed to invest \$42 million in civic infrastructure,” said Patrick Seeb, Executive Director of the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation. “We know these discussions can inspire real progress and we expect more from this year’s residency.”

The public is invited to participate in the conversation by attending one of many events throughout the week and to engage online (#placemakingMSP, Facebook and Twitter). Visit riverfrontcorporation.com/placemaking-residency to receive notification of the event schedule, links to registration and additional information. Events will be updated in the coming weeks.

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ABOUT THE PLACEMAKING RESIDENTS

Dr. Richard Jackson is the renowned author of 'Designing Healthy Communities' and the host of the acclaimed PBS documentary series of the same name. He speaks around the world about the connection between how we build our cities and public health. A medical doctor, he is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Science. He is a professor of Environmental Health Sciences at the UCLA School of Public Health. Formerly, he was Chief Public Health Officer in the State of California and Director of the National Center for Environmental Health at the CDC in Atlanta. Dr. Jackson is the first Medical doctor elected to the Board of the American Institute of Architects.

Gehl Studio is the San Francisco based office of the world-renowned Gehl Architects, with work crossing the fields of architecture, urban design and city planning in over 50 countries and 250 cities around the world. Gehl's approach focuses on how the built environment connects to – and is mutually beneficial to - people's quality of life. Their unique approach lives at the intersection of social science and architecture, and staff use observation & analysis to help us understand public life. Throughout their projects, they spend time counting, measuring, and analyzing the spaces that we are working to improve. They are particularly known for creating pop up and temporary solutions, such as the global phenomena Park(ing) Day initiative and recently overseeing the high-profile Market Street Prototyping Festival in San Francisco.

Anthony Iton, M.D., J.D., MPH is Senior Vice President for Healthy Communities at The California Endowment. Dr. Iton oversees the organization's 10-Year, multimillion-dollar statewide commitment to advance policies and forge partnerships to build healthy communities and a healthy California. His primary focus includes health of disadvantaged populations and the contributions of race, class, wealth, education, geography, and employment to health status.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

More than 30 organizations are involved in planning this year's residency, including: Allina Health, Asian Economic Development Association, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, City of Bloomington, City of Lakes Rotary Club (Minneapolis), City of Minneapolis, City of Minneapolis Neighborhood and Community Relations, City of Saint Paul, Dayton's Bluff Community Council, District Energy St. Paul, East Metro Strong, Frogtown Farm, East Side Freedom Library, HealthEast, Hennepin County Community Works, Hmong American Partnership, James J. Hill Center, Latino Economic Development Center, Lower Phalen Creek Project, Metro State University, Midtown Greenway Coalition, Midtown Community Works Partnership, Minneapolis Bike Coalition, Minneapolis Downtown Council and Downtown Improvement District, and East Downtown Council, Neighborhood Development Center, Ramsey County, Saint Paul RiverCentre, Saint Paul Port Authority, Science Museum of Minnesota, Smart Trips, Urban Oasis, Urban Roots and Urban Ventures.

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The 4th Annual Residency is funded through the generosity of HealthEast with additional support from the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross), Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, John S. & James L Knight

Foundation, McKnight Foundation, and Science Museum of Minnesota/University of Minnesota, Institute on the Environment.

ABOUT THE PLACEMAKING RESIDENCY

For the past three years, a renowned placemaking expert has been invited to the Twin Cities to engage community members in thinking about how we can collaboratively grow and evolve our cities. From improving economic outcomes for residents and businesses, to engaging diverse and underrepresented community members, to evaluating how physical assets in neighborhoods can be engines of economic development, the residency brings together business leaders, public officials, community activists, researchers, arts groups, entrepreneurs, and neighborhood residents to address the issues of our day.

ABOUT SAINT PAUL RIVERFRONT CORPORATION

Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation is a private, non-profit organization that champions visionary urban design as a dynamic driver of economic vitality and quality of life in the greater MSP metropolitan region. With the belief that urban design significantly contributes to quality of life and business climate, we serve as an urban design resource for diverse community redevelopment efforts such as the Central Corridor Light Rail Line, City of Wayzata's Lakefront Planning Initiative, the Great River Passage, and East Metro Strong.

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